

4 C's: Building a Network of Support for Your Organization

Key Ideas from Seth Godin:

- **Make Connections:** We are living through and are right at the key moment of a change in the way ideas are created and spread and implemented.
 - Mass marketing requires average ideas because it is intended to reach masses of people. Instead, focus on the idea of building a tribe, on leading and connecting people and ideas.
 - “People want to connect. What we do for a living now is to find something worth changing, and assemble tribes that assemble tribes that spread the idea and spread the idea that becomes far bigger than ourselves. It becomes a movement.”
 - “It is about finding a group that is disconnected and that already has a yearning to connect.”
- **Find True Believers:** Success comes from finding and engaging your organization’s true believers.

The 4 C's:

I. Challenge

- What is your story? What problem is your organization challenging?
- How could you better define and present it?

II. Culture

- Is your organization building a culture that people want to join? How?
- What more could you do to create a culture that people want to join?

III. Connect

- Who are you connecting? Who are you leading?
- What does this mean for how you should conduct outreach and fundraise?

IV. Commitments

- Who are your true believers?
- What commitments are you making to them and asking of them?

I. Challenge	II. Culture
III. Connect	IV. Commitment

Getting Ready for Your Next Networking Event

Have Your "Opener" Prepared

If you have not created your own opener yet, now is the time to do so. Always make sure your opener is short and sweet and practice your delivery so that it is causal and natural. Remember, the skill you want to develop here is to focus only on connecting with people and making new relationships—not asking for anything.

Decide in Advance How Many People You Would Like to Meet

You can stress yourself out at networking events if you try to do too much. You really can only comfortably meet about five people in the time you have at most events; sometimes a few less and sometimes a few more. So, decide in advance how many people you would like to meet and try not to exceed that goal. If you rush from person to person then you will have lost the idea that you are there to develop new relationships and this is done at a slower pace because relationships are built on trust; trust takes the time to get to know someone.

Have the Mindset of Being a Resource to Others

When you are a resource to others, it means that you are in some ways viewed as an expert. You could be an expert at sharing other contacts with people who *are* experts. When you are a resource of information to people you increase your value to them and they will want to know you better. Be careful not to be a know-it-all or be too pushy with what or who you know; always have the intent to be helpful and it will be greatly remembered and appreciated.

Stand at the Entrance and Meet and Greet

One way to be very active at a networking event is to stand near the entrance, or even just past the registration area, and meet and greet attendees as they come in. Point out to them where they can put their hat and coat, where the refreshments are and even where the washrooms are located. This can make a great first impression as well as relieve some stress if you are feeling a little nervous. Taking the initiative to meet and greet can be a very winning and enjoyable activity.

Approach Smaller Groups of Attendees

While working your way through the crowd of other networking attendees, try to approach only smaller groups of people of about three or four if this is at all possible. A smaller more intimate group of this size lends itself more to having a more relaxed conversation because it is easier to focus on each person.

Ask Questions that are of Genuine Interest to You

At a networking event, there will be a lot of exchange of light conversation because most are meeting people for the first time. Once you are past this, ask more inquisitive questions such as, what brings them to the event, their professional background, or what got them started in that path or direction. These types of questions will draw someone out to talk a bit more so that you can get to know them.

Always Ask for Their Business Card

With each person that you meet and have some conversation with, politely ask them for one of their business cards. The exchange of business cards is a very common activity at business networking events but often you can come away with too many cards so try to be selective of who you ask. Make notes on the back of the card of things you talked about to jog your memory later on when you want to follow-up with them. If they do not ask you for one of your cards, do not be upset about this.

Follow Up with Hand Written Notes

If you really want to make an impact on your new contacts, write them a hand written note instead of following up with a phone call. It does not have to be long, and if you made good notes of what you talked about, then you can make reference to it. This is sure to leave a lasting impression.